The
COMMONWEAL

VOLUME XLVII *February* 6, 1948 NUMBER 17

THE WEEK 411
APPREHENSIONS IN 1945 (II) *Dorothy Thompson* 414
CO-OPS AND TAXES *Richard Giles* 418
COMMUNICATIONS 421
Who Killed the Drama?—Letter from a Replaced Person
THE STAGE *Kappo Phelan* 424
THE SCREEN *Philip T. Hartung* 424
BOOKS 425
The Roosevelt Era—F.D.R., His Personal Letters—Early Years— The Wild Sweet Witch—The Condemned—Message from a Stranger—Time and Chance—Donald of China—The Review of Religion—*Paris Spleen*

THE COMMONWEAL *is indexed in the Reader's Guide, Catholic Periodical Index and Catholic Bookman. Founded by the Calvert Associates, Inc., in* 1924 *with Michael Williams as President and Editor.*
Published weekly and copyrighted 1948 in the U.S.A. by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter February 9, 1934, at the post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. U.S. and Canada $6 a year. Foreign $7. Single copies 15c

EDWARD S. SKILLIN, *Editor*
PHILIP BURNHAM, *Executive Editor*
C. G. PAULDING, *Managing Editor*
Associate Editors
John C. Cort, Anne Fremantle, Gregory Smith
Kappo Phelan, *Theater* Philip T. Hartung, *Cinema*
Corresponding Editor
Harry Lorin Binsse
Advertising Manager
John Brubaker

Nazi-Soviet

THE Nazi-Soviet Papers published by the State Department are of very great interest in themselves, before all effects they may have on people's political opinions and on governments' actions. Indeed, they are not likely to have a clear and serious effect upon state actions and personal ideologies. History already had in the public domain more than enough evidence about the character of the Nazi-Soviet régimes and their brutal and cynical conduct from 1939 to 1941. At this page in the book, very few will likely change their judgments and opinions and commitments on the basis of new evidence which the State Department releases. Those who excuse Hitlerism and support Stalinism are hard customers to sell with documents.

It would not be correct to draft finished lessons from the excerpts of the material published so far in the newspapers, but there are several general lines that can safely be drawn. "Such people," as the German Ambassador to Moscow, Count von der Schulenberg, calls Molotov and the communist half of them, are freezingly cold and cynical characters in their conduct of the affairs of state. Sentimentality is to be avoided in thinking about or in dealing with them. Both the régimes were aggressive 100 percent up to the limit of their material capabilities, and both understood each other beautifully upon this understanding. Let the buyer beware.

The newly published documents do not certify the place of "ideology" in the nazi and communist states. Nazism and communism clearly meant much more to the German and Russian governments than simply instruments of imperialist aggression. The colossal and insolent cynicism of the whole Hitler-Stalin get-together should not disguise that fact. Ribbentrop and Stalin could joke in their particular "genial" fashions:

> Herr Stalin interposed that the Anti-Comintern Pact had in fact frightened principally the City of London and the small British merchants.
>
> The Reich Foreign Minister concurred and remarked jokingly . . . a joke . . . which had been going the rounds for several months, namely, "Stalin will yet join the Anti-Comintern Pact."

But, nevertheless, Hitler told Mussolini that he finally felt "spiritually free" only after deciding to war upon Stalin. And Stalin, it appears probable, joined, as it were, the Anti-Comintern Pact (he tried hard enough for the "Four Power Treaty.") on the flexible and realist principles of communist politics. Ideologies which have power to govern as their basic requirement and criterion, prior, even, and prerequisite to the objectives of government, may easily come together for a while and act together without violence to their own identities. These documents do dramatize the unifying features of communism and nazism, first this capital will and idea to rule, to have power as totally and widely as the physical facts permit.

Most interesting, on the level of gossip and also, no doubt, on the level of highest philosophy, are the pictures of men which these documents portray: these mighty men of our age and how they treat and speak and deal with each other.

But what practical or semi-practical thing is there to do about it? Not, certainly, to take a lofty and satisfied moral tone about "such people" and such doings. Not for many reasons. The *Daily Worker* disapproved the publication, opining that it was "not intended to improve Soviet-Americans relations." It was not appeasement, if that is what the *Worker* meant, but relations can be much sounder when they are based on recognition of the facts, and not upon lies and the suppression of truth. A worrisome problem statesmen can get from the secret sections of the Hitler-Stalin Pact is that of Russia's declared and still unsatisfied objectives. Hitler was to give his partner free play across Iran to the Persian Gulf and across Turkey to the Straits, which the Russians were clear and frank about wanting. There is no reason to suppose that unexpected compensations elsewhere have turned Russia from these

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

objectives—as, of course, considerations of sovereignty and law and justice did not deflect her in the first place. But once again, the most fertile practical study of the documents is that of men and contemporary human conduct and belief. Here, captured from an obsolete château in the no longer remote Harz Mountains, are rarely revealing passages showing the very end of our political concepts and habits and predicaments: the men of greatest power putting to act the dynamic decisions that govern our day. We must learn to change men; to change ourselves.

The Midwest to the Sea

ONE of the most interesting of our recurring national debates has been revived by President Truman's appeal to congressional leaders to enact the St. Lawrence River seaway and hydroelectric power project. It has been enlivened by the debates in the Senate. There is an imposing line-up on both sides. The opposition numbers such seaports as Baltimore, Boston, New Orleans, New York and Philadelphia. It includes also other vitally interested economic groups such as the eastern railroads, various brotherhoods of railroad employees, John L. Lewis and the coal operators, local public utilities and a number of eastern financial interests. On the other team, besides the President, are Senator Wiley of Wisconsin and the majority of his Foreign Affairs Committee, upstate New York, Governor Dewey and the Middle West generally. In Congress and the nation as a whole the chances are that those favoring the idea are well in the majority; on the other hand, the way of the obstructionist is so much easier than that of the advocate in our political system that the chances of passage are not glaringly bright.

The chief arguments of the aforementioned vitally interested groups revolve about the danger that present facilities would be rendered of little use and numbers of present workers thrown out of employment. This a contention that must be met. It is easy, of course, to say that in the long run it would be better for the citizens in our eastern seaports if a number of them had to leave their over-concentrated metropolises and find new jobs under more ideally decentralized conditions. But that would require a lot of convincing. Nor can they be expected to be particularly pleased at the prospect of being comparatively inactive during the four or five months of the year that the mighty St. Lawrence is frozen over. It would seem, in fact, that Senator Wiley has taken the only feasible tack in contending that if our quarter-trillion economy is maintained and expanded year by year (and the St. Lawrence waterway and power development would have a key rôle in such expansion) workers in the mining, railroad and shipping industries would not have to worry much about their jobs. If the Senator will pursue this line of thought and document it thoroughly he may make real inroads on the sectional opposition.

Hardly anyone denies that the St. Lawrence project would have its uses. What they seem to object to is undertaking it now. The world is too unsettled and the waterway and power plants would be too vulnerable to enemy bombing. Costs of government are already astronomic and this would simply pile it on at a time when there is no special need for it. An undertaking of this scope at present, its opponents hold, would also add materially to perilous inflationary pressures. And understandably impressed by the rigors of this winter, they inquire whether it is justifiable to put the American taxpayer to such added expense for facilities that will be frozen up 40 percent of the time.

Here, too, are some questions. One of the most difficult to turn back flatly is the vulnerability of the St. Lawrence from the air. You can say that things have hardly come yet to such a pass and that in the meantime much is to be gained militarily from building up our productive and transportation potential. The depletion of our coal and oil resources points to the urgency of developing electric power and the St. Lawrence embodies the greatest power potential of them all, even greater than the mammoth Grand Coulee. Exhaustion of the Mesabi Range iron deposits also underlines the need of connecting the Midwestern heavy-industry belt, our most highly industrialized area, with the sea; it will be increasingly dependent for raw materials on distant sources.

There are several other weighty arguments for bringing the 40-year St. Lawrence seaway development to completion now by the proposed self-liquidating plan. The TVA constitutes a steadily more documented argument for the good economics of regional development. But most appealing of all is the prospect of connecting the Great Lakes and its cities, plus central and western Canada, with the broad Atlantic—even for seven or eight months of the year.

Free Franc and Western Union

IN AUGUST, 1947, after less than a month's trial of convertibility, the British abruptly ended their brief experiment that even in so short a time had threatened economic disaster. They had not informed Paris in advance of their action, nor did the French, nor yet the International Monetary Fund, disapprove or object. Italy was the next to make a major financial move, when recently she devalued her currency; somewhat unexpectedly, Moscow was the next to follow suit. Now, on Sunday, January twenty-fifth, the French have not only devalued the franc from 119 to 214 per dollar but have created a "free" market. This "free" market will be used at pres-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ent only for quoting the U.S. dollar and the Portuguese escudo, but other "hard" currencies may be added later.

There is no doubt that the French were obliged to devalue. The almost complete cessation of buying by U.S. importers, owing to the unreal value of the official franc, and in anticipation of an expected devaluation, during the past six months, was only one reason. An even more cogent one was the impossibility of halting the inflationary spiral by any other means, or of ceasing the snowballing in size and importance of the black market, which had become in France, as in Italy, the only real one.

The International Monetary Fund's disapproval is not of devaluation. That, indeed, it welcomed and "was prepared to concur in." In fact, the Fund spoke approvingly of a "realistic rate" and went so far as to give France a pat on the back for "the budgetary and fiscal measures directed at monetary stabilization." What the Fund fears is the second part of the new French program: it is very suspicious of a multiple-value currency, of any currency that is half-slave and half-free. For if "hard" currencies can be bought and sold in a market within France at fluctuating rates, this may menace the internal security and the economic and perhaps even the political structure of neighboring nations. "Scope for competitive depreciation" will, the Fund states, encourage "trade distortions" and cast "unwarranted doubts on the real strength of many currencies through the apparent discount applied to them in the French system."

In fact, the IMF declares that any multiple currency menaces the precarious European economic balance and actually destroys the whole elaborate house built at Bretton Woods out of calling cards: for if one nation can huff and puff that house down, so can all comers.

Seldom have results crowded so quickly upon a single action, rewards and punishments succeeding each other so fast that even M. Schumann may be wondering which are which. Paris is now favored by the UN for the next Assembly meeting; France can look forward to wonderful tourist trade; there is good hope that France may coax home some of her errant currency, of which there is said to be over $300,000,000 in this country alone. Also, the first movements of the free franc have been satisfactory.

On the debit side, however, Britain and the U. S. have declared that they cannot now agree to the decision of the Berlin experts on the Saar allocations; and Moscow is not amused; whilst Socialists all over the world, from Stafford Cripps to Léon Blum, are grinding their teeth and gnashing their carrots over this unseemly sign of life, almost of vigor, on the part of *ci-devant* Laissez-Faire.

Britain is, indeed, disgusted: though less from fear of the French undercutting her export trade (the French largely export luxury goods, the British the products of their heavy industries) than from fear that she will not be able to prevent the pound finding its way onto the "free" market.

This is a testing-time not only for the value of the franc, or of any, and all, currencies, but also of the whole idea of a Western Union and of ERP upon which the possibility of such a union in turn depends. It is, indeed, England and not France who is the chief benefactor-to-be of ERP, but the U.S. has declared that ERP's success depends on how far the beneficiary nations are prepared to set their own houses in order. No one will deny that France is doing her damnedest to do just that, and is being completely realistic about it. But it is hardly the most tactful action on the part of a team member to flout the forty-six other members before term begins or the track has been officially declared open!

Yet it is difficult not to be delighted that France is so very much alive—even if she is also kicking.

When Will DP's Be Admitted?

FOR the third post-war winter, more than eight hundred thousand displaced persons remain in European displaced-persons camps. Poles, Balts, Ukrainians, Czechs and Yugoslavs, for the most part, forcibly transported into Germany for slave labor during the war, they cannot return to their Soviet-dominated homelands because of political and religious persecution there. Their plight has for months been the subject of intense American and international concern; yet during 1947 only 7,000 of the non-Jewish DP's (who account for 80 percent of the total) were resettled in all the countries of the world. This year some seventeen nations—and the United States is among the missing—have agreed to admit about 20 percent of those remaining in the camps of Austria, Germany's western zones and Italy.

Their cause has been argued most thoroughly. Their need of a new start in life, ardently democratic sentiments, welcome skills in agriculture, construction, manufacture, trades and professions; also the connection between their admittance to this and other countries and the success of the Marshall Plan. The Stratton Bill, permitting a hundred thousand admissions a year for four years, has been duly offered in Congress, with the avowed support of many of the leaders of both parties (as also by more than one hundred of the leading American civic, religious and professional groups). The pertinent information has just been assembled by the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons of 39 East Thirty-sixth Street, New York 16, N. Y., in their booklet, the "Displaced Persons What's What." But the time for argument is past. The question is: What is holding things up?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Apprehensions in 1945 (II)

Concluding excerpts from a private diary written before the war was ended

Dorothy Thompson

THUS the first World War of unlimited objective, of "Unconditional Surrender," of "total victory," of extermination of peoples, fought neither to restore one social, political and cultural order, nor to create a new one; fought over Europe, with Europe, and against Europe; using an ally one moment, and repudiating it the next; turning today's enemy into tomorrow's co-belligerent without co-belligerent status; fought for human dignity and human rights—and for the deportation, looting and starvation of helpless populations—fought with guerrillas one moment and against them the next, issuing secret armistices and secretly repudiating them, pouring radio broadcasts into Germany urging revolt against nazism and putting up posters for the Army of Occupation instructing the troops to regard every German as a nazi, organizing Free Germany in Moscow and repudiating it after Yalta—aimless, formless, the total war fought for Total Peace, without a definition or even a mental picture of what peace is—except as an "Organization," whose only clear and immediate purpose is to continue the war unitedly against Germany after the German troops have surrendered, to prevent a totally devastated and decimated country from ever rising again, needing the enemy for cement, and fearing that the cement is mined, a war "against imperialism," for imperialism, by means of an imperium-destroying nihilism, its leaders speaking more candidly than they know, of a "peace based on Force," instead of a Force based on Peace.

★

Do I paint the picture too black? Fervently do I pray it may be so. Yet the conservative forces, which might try to hold this nihilism in check, are silent. The Pope in a Christian world, repeatedly raises a voice of warning for the fate of Christendom. But he is "pro-Franco," a "fascist," and in our world only the argument ad hominem counts, and ears are deaf to reason appealing to reason. For the sake of the Total War and the Total Peace the original causes and reasons for the war are lost sight of entirely, and the deepest traditions sacrificed. Britain fought this war to halt the extension of German nihilism and prevent the domination of Eurasia by a single power. Now she must permit Russia to absorb Eastern Europe, and eventually with all but certainty, Germany, too. The United States fought for the status quo of the Atlantic Charter. But Wilson's America, that at least stood firm for the actual protection of populations after the last war, settles for having Mr. Harriman help supervise "free elections," together with Mr. Molotov, whose Soviet Union has never had a free election, the assumption being that the Soviet authorities will be more liberal toward Poles than toward Russians!

Only the Soviet Union, under the impact of her greatest historic danger, does not depart from the deepest traditions of her Byzantine past, but returns to them. There is health and power in the instinct of this people, of illimitable perspective and will, softened by no hint of liberalism or western civilization, docile, humble, and fierce, fecund and life-loving, and careless of death as the life-confirming usually are.

The Western-imported socialism and intellectual theorism, held up always by a superficial and often foreign-born or foreign-educated intelligentsia, is swept away by the primitive call of the centuries of the soil—of the blood, and Peter the Great and Ivan the Terrible arise, as it were, out of their tombs. Hitler's dream of the Reich of Blood and Soil was a German romance. Stalin has that Realm—without the dream, as he has the only successful and totally totalitarian state. The nazis had to depend for their totalitarianism on *"gleichschaltung,"* a process which left many kernels of opposition in the population and its social classes, especially among the working-masses, who could not be "liquidated" utterly. The extirpation process in Russia has been far more radical and continuous. The vague hope that civil freedoms may be introduced after the war is wish-dreaming, disregarding the nature of the totalitarian state as such. Stalin not only destroys opposition directed at even inconspicuous and unimportant details; he destroys it in anticipation; he bumps off "potential aggressors." Everyone is such who is not completely demoralized as a free, thinking political creature. And he must do so, for such is the nature of the Soviet régime, its basic premise, and the source of its strength.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The content of the régime can change—and is changing. The form cannot.

It is significant that not a single Russian film—as far as I have seen—has interpreted this war in Marxian terms of the class struggle. The uniformed Marshal makes himself into the image of Stalin the Great, not Lenin, the Teacher. The Eastern Church, always the instrument of the Russian State, is revived, and the Patriarch crowned in pomp and glory. Russian publicists may say that "Russia is Europe," but not in a century has she been less so—more definitely, deeply, profoundly Russian, Eastern, Byzantine, Alexandrine.

Beside the uncertainties of the West, Russia moves with animal poise. Stalin makes his own programs, affects his own faits accomplis, accepts only compromises that can be half-contemptuously granted, since they are meaningless and no restrictions on his power. The West needed the sharpest intelligence, the deepest fidelity to its own greatest traditions, and the strongest will to match the nation whose intelligence is shrewd, untheoretical, natural, supremely self-protective, utterly practical, cruel, treacherous, and powerful of will.

★

But the United States has mobilized neither adequate will, prudence, nor intelligence. The Great American Tradition is hesitant and tonguetied. And we have frustrated Britain. At Teheran, Britain and America should have stood together out of the pure instinct of self-preservation. The President's sanguinity, his belief that he could fix things—with charm—and his American tendency greatly to overrate our power, led him to the rôle of mediator, conciliator, when he was there to protect an all but shattered Western civilization. Stalin knows what basic power is. It is not airplanes and the capacity to manufacture them, nor wealth, but manpower, geographical position, control and the uninhibited will to *use* power. Stalin's Red Army Staff are as familiar with Haushofer as is the Wehrmacht. The Eurasian complex is the mightiest position in the world. Stalin thinks in power terms wholly, and exclusively. Power is freedom of action, and will to power. He joins the Dumbarton Oaks organization only when he has pulled its teeth, and he joins it to use it, for whatever it may be worth, not to be protected by it! He puts no limits to Soviet power but the limits of Soviet capacity. He distrusts all countries and cultures except the Soviet and all power except that under its own control. The only trustworthy communists are Soviet communists, the Comintern is of interest only as an undermining force of the power of non-Russian lands. His imperialism is not British. Like Hitler, he has no interest in overseas Empires, or in far-off colonies for exploitation, but only in the building of a contiguous land Empire, on the Roman pattern, or perhaps more accurately on the pattern of Philip of Macedon.

But I doubt if anyone in our State Department would ever seek to see the connection between Stalin's plans and possibilities and the realm of Philip, or the Osmanlis, for it is the fashion of the age to believe that history began with itself. And (unlike the founding fathers) we think to learn nothing from a study of the classical empires.

Dionysius made his state (Syracuse) a fortress surrounded by a "scrap heap of states," from which he extended his power. Philip of Macedon "put the center of gravity in the periphery"—in practical terms, in the army, and from the periphery exercised control over the whole Hellenic world. Stalin has decentralized the Soviet Union into the thirteen constituent Republics, and has also so decentralized the Red Army, while keeping absolute political and military control. (The moving of centers of gravity toward frontier regions is always likely to center power in the Army. Prussia became a military state because it was the outpost of the Germanic world against the East. Germany became Prussian because the Prussian army protected Prussia, whereas all Europe fought over the rest of Germany.) Stalin's armies are styled, not Soviet, but Ukrainian, White Russian, Siberian. The Lublin government of Poland was not organized in Moscow, but in Kiev. Eventually Moslem armies and Moslem governments, organized in Moslem Central Asia, will reach out to their fellow Moslems in Arabia. All this is not "imperialism." There can always be the device of "friendly governments," but eventually governments "friendly" to the Soviet Union will not be allowed to be friendly to the Anglo-Saxons.

★

For that is the other fact-lessness (fecklessness) of the One World idea—the Universal World Peace concept. Cultures and civilizations are not one. The concept of unity through "interest" is a shopkeeper's dream—many shops in one great department store. But nations are not booths at a world's fair, but forms of organic life, refusing to fit the theories designed for them. It is impossible to cement cultures by "agreements"—collective bargains, as it were. They may live side by side, in prolonged peace, given favorable circumstances, but the attempt to merge them or in some total way to control them, must result in the conquest of one by the other. It is precisely when one country tries to "agree" with another on a common policy about any specific thing—except killing mutual enemies—that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one side or the other must lose. The Soviet system, for instance, which both as Marxian theory and as Russian tradition has no common roots in the parliamentary and class-states of the West, *cannot* agree with them on matters of human liberty and individual rights. If it did, it would cease to be.

Also it is the cultural differences between Poland and Russia, far more than the racial, which will disturb relations between them forever unless Poland is left really free—or unless the Polish culture is completely blotted out, and the population permanently reduced to clods.

It was the Catholic Church and culture that kept Poland alive for 150 years under partition. The question of whether Russia (the Soviet Union) or Poland is "right" or "wrong" is quite irrelevant. The fact is that they are incompatible. Russian culture belongs to Byzantium. Even Russian Communism does. (Tsar-state-church-people all One.) Poland is Roman Catholic. Modern liberal rationalism is impatient of this difference. But the difference is a fact. The most important fact about Poland is Roman Catholicism, with its hierarchical concepts, its "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's," its peculiar Freedoms—to serve or to betray—its ties to Western Christendom and the European spirit. The Kultur-Kampf of Tsarist Byzantium on the one side, the Prussian Protestantism on the other, against Polish Catholicism, was what inflamed the century-old Polish resistance and kept alive the Polish nation. The resistance was always weak in that small part of Poland incorporated in the Catholic Austro-Hungarian Empire. There, though the people were poor, their spiritual sufferings were slight. Had all Poland been incorporated into Austria Polish nationalism would probably never have assumed as virulent a hue.

★

But all nations, as long as they are nations at all will fight for Life, which is a *Way* of Life, expressed in the folklore, the ritual, the pieties, the festivals, the loyalties, that flow uninterruptedly from father to son. The Catholic Way of Life is not the Way of Life of eastern civilization or the Protestant Western-democratic. Even the life together in Freedom of the two Western churches and cultures is difficult and precarious, as Ireland and Canada testify. It is easiest in the free-thinking but largely Christian countries of Britain, France, and the United States, though Britain's Great Revolution was a religious war. But Protestantism remains a Protest, an off-shoot "Reformation" of Roman Catholicism, in its own eyes. It is incompatible, on its own thesis, with the attempt to suppress Catholicism for those who wish to be Catholics, and is itself so divided into sects that it could never successfully struggle for complete cultural authority. While Communism, not in the economic sense alone nor primarily, is the avowed enemy of the Catholic Way of Life, a genuine contender for authority, and a Russian-dominated Poland could be maintained, directly or indirectly, only by the destruction of the Polish Catholic Culture—i.e. of the Polish Nation.

Every Pole, in whom the national spirit burns, feels this instinctively, if he does not know it intellectually. It is perfectly beside the point to argue whether we approve or disapprove of this Polish culture. There is no other. As long as we stand on the principle of the Rights of Nations—and we must stand on the principle because of the fact of Nations, or turn the whole world into Masses and despots—we must defend the Rights of Cultures, for Nation and Culture are one. Otherwise "nations" are mere geographic and administrative devices. Life in the Nation is Life in a Culture, or it is not life at all.

The Nation can only be extended as nation, not Empire, as far as the mother culture can be extended, either because it moves into a cultural void of primitive tribes which it then fills with its own cultural substance, or because it conquers or absorbs kindred cultures.

The British Commonwealth, settled by Britons and Europeans of kindred Way of Life, is actually part of the British Nation. India is not and never can be. It is irrelevant whether Britain "improves" India, or whether the British presence there demonstrably means material progress. Exactly in so far as the improvement and the progress lift the people above the clod-level, will the Imperial situation deteriorate, and the indigenous population think increasingly of themselves as "Indians." The White Man's Burden can only be carried by Imperialists, not by liberal democrats. Concessions to India will not keep it within the Empire but hasten its exodus. The greater the equality granted, the surer the revolt.

Similarly, any attempt of the Soviet Union, directly or indirectly, to extend itself into the civilization of Europe will fail—as Trotsky's European Marxism failed in Russia—unless it is maintained openly, ruthlessly, and brutally, as pure and simple armed oppression. It will have to be far more brutal than colonial imperialism, for in Europe it will clash with cultures as old and deep as its own. Tsarist Orthodox Russia was under eternal threat in Poland. Every Russian revolution and social disturbance was joined by the Poles. Bismarckian Prussia failed, though it unquestionably represented a higher state of material organization than the Polish. It built admirable roads, promoted sanitation, furthered a more scientific agrarian economy, competently administered cities. But underneath there was

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a secret, tenacious Way of Life, resentful, unhappy, unassimilated and unassimilable.

Cultural patterns, also, far more than race or language, bind or divide nations. The Slavic Poles are not "brothers" of the Czechs, the Russians, or the Serbs. They are infinitely closer, as history has repeatedly shown, to the Hungarians, with whom they have no racial or lingual ties at all. Like cleaves to like, but the likeness is in the mind-forms, not in the race, and the mind-forms evolve out of ancient habits, memories, and social institutions. This does not mean that the Way of Life of a Nation is fixed in one pattern forever. It does mean that every change in the Way of Life, that is more than transitory or catastrophic, grows on the cultural stem. The remnants of feudalism that have survived in Poland and Hungary would, under conditions of freedom and security, surely pass in both countries as they prove unadaptable to the needs and realities of the modern age. In no country has the once ruling Landlord class been able to maintain itself against the industrial and intellectual middle and working classes, for it has lost its economic sovereignty. But the essential thing for the continuity of the nation and culture is that these and everything else should pass *in their own way*.

The hierarchical concepts of Catholic European societies cannot be proved to be less creative of human happiness, welfare, and culture than the horizontal-democratic. The judgment of history to date is that the greatest and most stable human societies of the West have been so. The charge that these are "fascistic" is the palpable nonsense of illiterate agitators. Exactly the contrary is the fact. Fascism is not their offspring. It is the offspring of industrial-capitalist democracy—the Popular Leader, a "Common Man"—speaking for and through the mob, drawing his janissaries from it, and bribing or terrorizing the Economic power to finance and provide for it. It is the "Nobles"—those with the deepest sense and feeling of responsibility for traditions, forms, decencies, law, and liberty—who most quickly and most accurately diagnosed it as not "order" but nihilism. Ortega y Gasset, Catholic and conservative, attacked it when thousands of "radicals" in and out of fascist countries, praised it. Its harbingers and apologists, the creators of its "literature" were "neo-socialists"—like Ferdinand Fried, Mueller van der Bruch, Hans Zehrer, Marcel Deat, Jacques Doriot, and Farinacci. Like Napoleonism, it was the offspring of revolutionism, the destroyer of all traditional and conservative forms and the polluter of their content. It was the revolution of de-classed intellectuals, de-railed officers, proletarianized bourgeoisie, unstable youth, and unemployed workers. Even Francoism is not a real fascist movement, for it lacked the mass-base of the true fascist phenomenon. It was a General's coup —which Hitlerism definitely was not—and it was a mere imitator of fascist forms, an ersatz-fascism, which had to import foreign aid to put itself over, and which was soon wishing for a restoration movement to which to pass its power.

★

Fascism, in its most complete and representative form, won, as Hitlerism, in precisely that European country where the national tradition had been most undermined, by military defeat, inflation—the destroyer of the middle classes—Russian-controlled communism, the abdication of the monarchy, and an imported, not indigenous "democracy." The only forces which could have prevented or overthrown it, had become so weakened and corrupted that they were traitorous to their own traditions. These were, precisely, the high officers of the Reichswehr, the nobility and the conservative forces in general. The fights of Pastor Niemoeller, Cardinal Faulhaber, and Bishop Count von Galen, who raised their voices in responsible pride above the mass-howling of the mass heilers; the last-minute attempt of General Schleicher to hold the Reich by a liaison of army and trade unionists; the bitter, never-ending contest of the General Staff against the mob and party armies of S.A. and S.S., the resignation in protest, and in advance of the war of the Chief of Staff, General Beck, and thirty other high-ranking officers, a stand which sooner or later brought about their "liquidation," to the last pitiful and pitiable attempt at a coup d'état by Count Stauffenberg and Marshal Witzleben, and the organization in Russia, under General von Seydlitz of the Union of German officers, to work to stop the war and save the Fatherland—every single one of these attempts against Nazism has come from the conservative elements in whom German traditionalism is strongest.

But it is wearying, footless, and even dangerous to fight for the recognition of this historical fact. The democratic masses and the democratic press of the Western world will not have it so. Hitler has been established as a "tool" of the Junkers, the industrialists, and the Reichswehr general staff. So mass-Hitlerism can only be liquidated and supplanted by mass-democratism, although the latter was, by collaboration or default, the creator of the former.

For the popular interpretation of the Nazi revolution is also a fact. Its truth or falsehood are historically inconsequential. The slogan is true—in the sense that it, and not the facts, makes the history. The Emil Ludwigs, the Tetens, the Foersters, and the Rex Stouts, who spread the legend are fools—but they are also historical forces. The wise men or the truth-tellers had

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

better betake them to monasteries to sit out the monstrous times ahead. Let them try to express these facts and interpretations in the "free" press, and organized claques of "writers to the editor," "popular" radio commentators, and the patriotic "Writers' War Boards," riding the wave of the will-to-have-it-as-I-want it, will howl them down.

This modern democratism is liquidating traditional Anglo-Saxon Western democracy. That is its historic function. It cannot restore nor create anything anywhere. It can only, by undermining and destroying the existing nations as cultures, including their own, with its One-World-Great-Power-Peace, open the gates to Caesarism and chaos, agitating for and furthering catastrophe as the midwife of Progress and Regeneration. It turns out that we are fighting, not for a proud and great Anglo-American culture, which gave the world Shakespeare, Burke, Locke, Hume, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lincoln, William James, Arnold Toynbee, puritanism, self-government through self-discipline and self-control, more than its share of pure science, and historical analysis, habeas corpus and civil liberty, along with a peculiarly ruthless and predatory capitalism—no, not for these—but for 60 million jobs, as the price and reward of several million other men's lives—the lives which didn't survive for the jobs, and were only legitimately expendable for a culture.

And—say our "liberals"—if we can't provide them, and prove "the superiority of capitalism," why, then, let Russian communism take over, though meanwhile we shall count on Russia saving the "system" (at the cost of the culture and civilization if need be) by purchasing six billion dollars worth of goods with our own money.

In such a mood of self-distrust the "strongest power on earth" finds it impossible (or is not interested) to restrain the Russians to protect the most fundamental human liberties—life being the first of them—of peoples in occupied territories, allied or enemy, both being now equal in their sufferings and oppressions. We live thus in the most hideous years in European history, except the ones to come. The reflection is not on Russia which has no interest in our concept of liberty but on ourselves.

Presently, we shall have no cause, however, to criticize the Russians. We also shall be acting in the same way, or worse. Worse because the Russians are acting true to their state-form and we shall be acting in treason to ours. Worse, because the Russians will limit their actions to those which are planned and purposeful from pure self-interest, while we shall be trampling over people or condoning it in the interest of "Peace," for no explicable interest at all. Worse, because Russia, having liquidated for herself, during this war, Western revolutionism and revived the nation from the well-springs of its tradition and past, may even escape the Napoleonism, which would otherwise be the natural next step, and drawing wisdom from historic memory and instinct, may hold its actions strictly within planned limits and so retain more self-control than we.

★

Russia is prepared to "rely on herself, invite no one, promise nothing." Not we. We shall rely on Dumbarton Oaks and the readiness of the weak to perish for a phantom peace.

The collapse of European civilization will no more affect Russia than the great Chinese famines—or the Russian—affected us. She does not belong to it, and does not yearn after it, but holds it in contempt except for what it can teach her of technology, for the next few short years.

But we, who hasten its decline, will shudder to our cultural foundations, with its fall. As it sinks it will pull with it, however imperceptibly at first, the British Imperium and the American Republic. Vast power, encompassing a moral and intellectual vacuum, a formidable technology without the restraints of Humanism, a bureaucratic and professional humanitarianism without charity, a science devoid of responsibility, a civilization empty of art, a democratism of the masses to enslave the masses—ending in Hitlerian Caesarism, the purposeless imperialism of private individuals, under whose tramping feet the people become "merely a part of the landscape."

"The earth"—as Dostoevsky foresaw before Spengler—"will weep for its old Gods."

This I put down for my own eyes, alone, in March 1945, praying I may awaken to another vision, fearing—knowing in my very bones—that I shall not, glad, despite the health of my blood, for the time when I shall return to the quarry out of which I came, and to its peace. Sorry only, praying only, for my dearly beloved son.

Co-ops and Taxes

RICHARD GILES

IT IS DOUBTFUL that the public has got anything useful out of last fall's running battle over the taxation of cooperatives. So far as the co-ops are concerned, they have more friends and more enemies than ever before, but are no better understood. Now the attack has abated, but the lull is certainly temporary. Taxation has been the handle of the weapon wherever co-ops have been attacked. In no democratic country, however, has the opposition succeeded in legislating co-ops into a form of profit business, although that seems everywhere to have been their unspoken purpose.

Neither the House Small Business Committee

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nor the House Ways and Means Committee has made any report on its findings. This probably satisfies the opposition, since most of the newspaper stories issuing from the hearings have created, more than any considered report would be likely to do, a popular impression that co-ops in some sense are guilty of tax evasion. We do not blame the newspapermen, for the subject is impossibly complex.

Co-ops count a few gains, however. We hope that some impression has spread of the peaceful, voluntary aims of cooperation. Farm co-ops report substantially increased attendance at their meetings. There are indications that the big regional cooperatives are more than ever determined to get along with each other. The farm co-ops, with considerable decency and foresight, have refused to toss the little urban co-ops to the wolves; witness after witness from the farm movement has been invited to express alarm over the menace of consumer action, and all have refused. Conversely, consumer co-ops have refused to concede that the statutory tax exemption provided for "agricultural cooperatives" should be abolished, although they might thus have assumed a sort of plaster virtue.

It should not be forgotten that after all we do not have a real Cooperative Movement in this country. We have many cooperative movements, many little cells only cautiously developing into an organism. The organism's growth has probably been helped rather than hindered.

Perhaps all public controversies have the same ugly character as this one. Perhaps it is impossible to carry on a dispute over a complicated question without vulgarity and lies. Fortunately, it can be reported that the bad manners of the National Tax Equality Association, and its president Ben McCabe, have alienated a good many decent business men and editors.

This National Tax Equality Association publishes a monthly bulletin in which, so far as I know, no full explanation of the tax status of cooperatives has ever appeared. Instead, it is full of horrid forebodings: co-ops are going to take over our whole economic system, co-ops deny the right of your son to come back from the army and go into business for himself, Joe Stalin likes co-ops, co-ops mean city people are going to own all the farms. Asked on the witness stand if he really thinks co-ops are communistic, McCabe said, "No, I have never really said that, we just write that in little boxes for our bulletin."

A better example of distortion may be drawn from the NTEA bulletin of last July. Two photographs appeared showing co-op food stores in Syracuse and Providence, each with a privately-owned food store next door. The caption under the pictures said, "The private merchants here shown are going to have a tough time competing with their tax-exempt neighbors." Having checked with each of the co-ops, I can report that each filed a federal income tax return last year, although the store in Providence had a loss for the year and made no tax payment. The former manager of the competing private store in Syracuse is working in an executive position for the Grange League Federation's co-op chain, and apparently is happy; his store was bought by another man who was quite conscious of the competition next door. The private store in Providence did not exist before the co-op opened, and its ownership is something of a mystery; it is suspected of being a trial-balloon in preparation for the opening of a supermarket. The picture caption was wrong in every detail.

★

The whole question of the effect of co-op competition on other businesses is extremely interesting, nevertheless, and even has some relevance, since most tax questions involve moral and social judgments. It is a commonplace observation that competition frequently helps build business volume. Department stores do better business when they are near other department stores, because women like comparative shopping. I have read somewhere that a roadside restaurant ought to be near two other roadside restaurants, and preferably in the middle. Certain types of monopoly tend to defeat themselves, because they frustrate the shopping impulse; thus Campbell's soup, which was alone in its field for many years, sold better when other manufacturers entered into competition with it. Co-ops, taken in this context, enrich the shopping experience and at least in that sense are good for trade.

Co-op people make broader claims than that, however. They say that non-profit operations increase purchasing power and thus create new opportunities for profit business. They point to Sweden, where the co-ops' influence on prices and therefore on purchasing power has been greatest, and tell you that there is more small business today in Sweden than there was when the co-ops were just starting. By returning the profits to the customers, co-ops build purchasing power and create customers for private business. This is their contribution to free enterprise.

But it must not be denied that co-ops occasionally put somebody out of business. New forms of competition usually do. A few years ago it was the mail-order houses, or the chains, or the improvement in transportation that brought more shoppers into the big cities. This is the short-term effect of competition, not to be confused with the long-term. Who is being put out of business today by co-ops I do not know. I think it would be hard to tell, because the A & P did $1½ billion business with 5,000 stores in 1946

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

while in 1937 they were doing $863 million with 13,000 stores. There things are hard to untangle —I know a town where the co-op took over the A & P's building, but it doesn't follow that the co-op drove the A & P out. Very likely, the A & P withdrew in pursuance of some broader strategy.

There is no tax law on the books that favors co-ops for their social value. The only tax law that provides for special treatment of co-ops is the federal income tax law affecting agricultural co-ops, and it was written (by Republicans) as an aid to farmers, not as an aid to co-ops. This statute says that an agricultural co-op need not pay federal income tax if: 1. it pays patronage refunds to all its customers alike, whether they are members or not, 2. it confines its trade 85 percent to farmers, 3. it satisfies certain other minor requirements.

The National Tax Equality Association has managed to create the impression that this law affects either all co-ops or all farm co-ops, but neither is the case. A consumers' co-op cannot possibly qualify under this law, and only about 50 percent of farm co-ops attempt to. All of which, of course, has nothing to do with the question of whether it is a good law or a bad law; your opinion of that must rest on a number of questions, some of which I have never seen answered. Does the law make it easier for a small co-op to get started? Does it, in fact, encourage co-ops to grow bigger than they might otherwise? Does it, as I have heard suggested, keep farm and city people from joining together in these co-ops? Does it actually deprive the federal government of substantial revenue? Does it mean that co-ops are driving honest businessmen out of business?

I don't know the answers to all these questions, but my general impression is that the law tends to hold the co-ops back rather than push them forward. It certainly drives them into some peculiar practices. For example, take Consumers Cooperative Association of Kansas City, which is pretty well known for its activity in the oil business. Like everybody else in the oil business, CCA finds it convenient to swap oil and gasoline with its competitors to keep shipping costs down. As a result of these swaps, CCA has found itself paying patronage refunds to such companies as Standard Oil of New Jersey and Gulf Oil—because the federal income tax statute says it has to treat all customers alike. CCA gave up qualifying for tax exemption last summer.

More important, this law recognizes formally something that is basic to an understanding of cooperatives. A co-op is fundamentally a membership organization, joined together for mutual service, with no idea of profit-making. Two hundred people join together in a credit union, for example. They save money together, lend it only to each other and make no effort to drum up outside business. Their purpose is totally different from the purpose of a man entering the small-loan business, and our legal tradition recognizes the credit union as a non-profit venture. Since income taxes are levied on profits, an organization that makes no profit pays no income tax; in the same way, a businessman who makes no profit for 1948 will pay no income tax, and a co-op that foregoes profit will pay no income tax. There is no question of inequality. The federal law affecting agricultural co-ops tries to duplicate these circumstances, and to a large extent succeeds.

But most co-ops *do* make a profit, and they *do* pay income taxes. Unlike credit unions, consumer co-ops will sell to members and non-members alike. It is customary for a consumer co-op to charge the prices current in the shopping area and return refunds to members out of surplus. Paying the refund makes the operation non-profit. But since normally no refund is paid to *non*-members on their business, any surplus resulting from their patronage is profit. Taxes are paid on this business in all co-ops.

The co-op in Providence, for instance, which was libeled by the National Tax Equality Association, is tax-exempt in only one strained sense. It is permitted by our legal traditions to overcharge its members, hold the surplus thus acquired to the end of the year without paying taxes on it and then pay it back to the members. If this is tax exemption, most businesses are guilty of the same thing. In fact, the law governing taxability of surpluses earmarked for refunds has developed mostly out of cases involving profit business.

One other co-op practice has had a good deal of publicity. This is the revolving fund—a method whereby the cooperative holds the refunds of the members for a specified period, say five years, to be used as working capital. The National Tax Equality Association, and the radio commentator Fulton Lewis, Jr., have made much of the "scraps of paper" which the members get instead of cash; they have not mentioned the fact that the refunds are paid at the end of five years or whatever the specified time is, nor have they admitted that this practice must be approved by vote of the members.

★

Now the proposals made by the enemies of co-ops vary in severity from some that sound mild and equable, to some that are downright brutal. It is sometimes proposed that the agricultural exemption be stricken off the books—this apparently has the backing of the National Association of Manufacturers, although the NAM

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

language is vague. It is sometimes proposed that trading surpluses be taxed as income unless they are paid out in cash refunds—this has the backing of Senator Taft and Fulton Lewis, Jr. It has sometimes been proposed that all trading surpluses be taxed as income, whether the obligation to pay refunds in cash or equivalent is recognized or not; this extreme measure might satisfy the National Tax Equality Association.

We are entitled to doubt that, however. There is no indication that the National Tax Equality Association would stop at any point; if it could get a law passed against the non-profit sale of all products except Bibles, it probably would. The North Dakota Farmers Union got a sense of the temper of the opposition last year, when a bill was introduced in the legislature empowering the insurance commissioner to close down the Farmers Union Insurance Company without showing cause. The bill was defeated by a scant five votes. The National Tax Equality Association, while it has concentrated on consumer and agricultural cooperatives, is also on record favoring taxes on the dividends of mutual insurance companies, mutual savings banks, and credit unions; and if it is consistent it will attack the voluntary chains to which 50,000 grocers and druggists belong, the Book of the Month Club, the Associated Press, the majority of credit rating bureaus and the very building in which McCabe has his office, the Minneapolis Grain Exchange, which is run as a co-op.

★

What will happen if these various proposals become law?

If the exemption for agricultural co-ops is wiped from the books, the big regional co-ops will probably not be much affected. CCA, as already mentioned, voluntarily gave it up last year, and so did the Grange League Federation. Farm co-ops now hesitating on the verge would probably be encouraged to take in urban members, and they would undoubtedly sell their surplus production to independent dealers in competition with profit business. At least one big farm co-op is considering selling hardware to all comers, including small retailers, which would be quite a blow to some of the manufacturers who have been out to kill the tax exemption.

If patronage refunds not paid in cash are made taxable, the co-ops will have to find another way to get members to reinvest their refunds. Many co-ops operate this way already: they send out a notice of dividends due and ask members to leave their money in. It is more work than the revolving-fund method, but it can be done.

If all trading surpluses are made taxable, the chances are that all co-ops in a position to do so will slash prices at the point of sale. To this there seems no alternative. Co-ops at present generally charge the market price and return the surplus in refunds for two reasons—it's a good way to avoid open price war, and it gives the co-op some fat to live on in case lean times come along. But there are many co-ops that make a practice of price-cutting, especially in lines of business where margins are high; and even in the co-op food store some co-op-produced items are sold at considerably better prices than elsewhere. Since a co-op's purpose is to save its customers money, it will do it by whatever method is most useful. If building up reserves in order to buy factories is possible, it will do that; but if price-cutting is the only way possible, it will do that.

Actually, no legislative action is considered likely this year in Washington. In the State Capitols, however, there is every reason to expect a revival of the campaign that produced anti-cooperative bills last year in Ohio, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Maryland, North Carolina, Missouri and Kansas. Aside from the genuine fear of co-ops that some small businessmen probably feel, there is no doubt that many little Leaders of small business are making use of the co-op menace in order to justify their jobs. There's money in bogeys; every trade association needs one; and the co-op bogey looks serviceable.

Communications

WHO KILLED THE DRAMA?

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: The wholly silly title and conclusion of Vivian Mercier's article, "Who Killed the Drama?" represents some kind of journalism, one supposes, although certainly not criticism—either of the book he is supposed to be discussing or of the American theater. As a matter of fact, Mr. Mercier does not conclude at all; he never answers his own question. Had he had the wit to ask—*"Who Is Killing the Drama?"* it is obvious that he would have been putting his own head in the noose, along with all the other professional refugees from practice—the ambitious Eric R. Bentley among them—who seem to have a love of reading and an overwhelming grasp of self-promotion. The theater demands a practicing audience, as well as practicing wrights; and there is no conscious drama outside it. And there are no non-practicing critics. I've got a suspicion that what Mr. Mercier really wants are the safeties of the study; the safeties of an acclaimed performance; and not to think. Otherwise, how can one possibly weave through his recent welter in these pages. Employing certainly partial and unhistorical definitions, he seems to reject both Realism and Expressionism in favor of *great experience* in the theater, and from one viewpoint he is perfectly right. But this viewpoint is naïve and not the one he professes to be using at the moment. Moreover, in shouting for "character, character character . . ." as

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

instruction to the *dead* American playwright, he yet announces that he will spend his authoritative tickets on the present Shakespearean, Shavian, and Euripidean-Jeffers revivals on our street, with a side-sneer at Tennessee Williams. But as Mr. Williams's play is nothing more (or less) than a current examination of character—which is to say, the diseased personality of our day—one wonders where Mr. Mercier's argument leads. Is he really hoping only for catharsis, or cure, in an aisle seat in any country? Assuming that the function of criticism is the assessment of discoveries, does he really imagine that this function depends on no practice or on random impressions? or, most of all, on no interest—no preparation for discovery? I think it is necessary to assure Mr. Mercier that no one and nothing is dead, so far. Not even the combined authors of the "History of the Modern Drama," which provided the spring for his mourning. Realistically, Expressionistically, Naturalistically, Neo-neo-classically, and just plainly, one would like to know if the Freedley-Clark book is good. Is it useful? Who edits what? Does the Dutch section give any possible excuse for the maunderings of Jan De Hartog? does the Spanish section give any good historical lead to Lorca? how is Brecht handled? and the Existentialists? I think a re-view is in order.

KAPPO PHELAN.

LETTER FROM A REPLACED PERSON

Ebenthal in Karnten, Austria.

TO the Editors: Your comments on my article published in your January 2nd issue only reached me now. They show the theoretical (and even practical) necessity for almost every author to declare his philosophical baggage before commenting on the history of our times. I definitely should have done so, since my views differ so radically from those of most of your readers. A few personal notes also should be added.

1. Please keep in mind that I was once a sincere supporter of the war against nazism. But by 1943 I doubted the morality of the methods used, and I despaired in the desirability of the concrete forms of the "outcome." I can understand very well why a Robert Lowell, who volunteered the day after Pearl Harbor, in 1944 refused to bear arms.

2. You are right in assuming that I am not a pacifist. Nor am I a perfectionist. Yet I am fully convinced that the total suffering of Europeans today is greater than in 1939. The suffering obviously is less in such nations as Norway, Belgium, etc. But it is—if you like a quantitative argument—far greater in far more populous nations. And after all, didn't we hope for an improvement?

3. Of course, the United States won the war militarily. But the victory was *thrown away* at the green tables.

4. I, at least, should never have been painfully surprised by the "outcome." I was always firmly convinced of the tremendous political inferiority of democracy and doubted many of its ethical claims.

5. I am opposed to democracy *because* I am a liberal. I am opposed to democracy because I believe that the totalitarian poison is contained *in nucleo* in democracy. I believe in the uniqueness of the human person and in his responsibility within the framework of his conscience *and knowledge.*

6. Hence I am absolutely opposed to the wholesale condemnation of people who reluctantly took out a nazi membership card. So is the family of my in-laws, who certainly have one of the most brilliant anti-nazi records in this province. But having been to jails and concentration camps, they realize aspects of totalitarianism which the average American (luckily!) cannot. As a good Conservative and non-democrat, I have to be far more indulgent towards the words, deeds and thoughts of the multitudes (rarely wicked but very ignorant!) who have been thrown into a political cauldron they have not the slightest intellectual preparation to understood or to cope with. You have to love them, you have to give them every opportunity, you must make them happy and give them freedom—but the happenings of our days surpass them as they surpass the vast masses in every country.

7. I am not in the least "desperate." I am, height of all arrogance, quite sure that I shall not go to Hell. My earthly expectations, on the other hand, are very reduced. That doesn't dampen my spirits. The Christian, by definition, is not a donkey eagerly following a carrot. The carrot over here is "out." But to Frederick III's *"Lerne zu leiden ohne zu klagen"* we have to add *"Lerne zu kämpfen ohne zu hoffen,"* "Learn to stuggle without (earthly) hope."

8. My "vested interest in America"? I have only to turn my ration card and see that 60 percent of my food comes from the U.S. That information is in print, there on the card, and it is quite true. I have also an American daughter. I have more American than even Austrian friends. And, finally, the inner conflict between democracy and liberalism has not even dawned upon most Americans. The issue is still a matter of "teleology" and evolution. *Therefore,* and for other reasons, America is still *at present* the true hope of the genuine liberal anywhere. This, with certain reservations, can still be said of England.

9. As to the Treaties of 1919-1920 and 1945-1947 I can merely repeat my rather fiery convictions or write a 10,000-word article. Most certainly, even if the Russian menace could be eliminated, what would be the result of the German imbroglio *alone* if not another war? Take only a German State like Bavaria, whose population has increased 50 (fifty) percent. Most Americans (and Britishers) are thinking too much in Atlantic terms. Your eyes get dimmed when once you look further East than France. But D. W. Brogan is absolutely right in calling the First World War the Second War of Austrian Succession. What you have seen now was its Third Act. *Here* we are living on the fatal tectonic spot. I have only to lean out of my window to see the Ofen Mountain, where Teutons, Slavs and Latins meet. Here the opportunities to see and to understand are a great deal better than anywhere else.

10. Of course, *I* did not weigh the *moral* odds 50:50 between the Western Democracies and the Totalitarians. Even in spite of Captain Liddell-Hart's conclusive asser-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion (Harper's, March, 1946, pp. 198-199) that the aerial warfare against the Hinterland was a British stratagem, the odds weigh heavily against the Totalitrians.

11. There is no such thing as the guilt of a *nation*. There is no such *moral* concept as "the Germans," "the Americans" or even "the Austrians." Granted that we may generalize, I am still puzzled about the reference to America's record in World War II as compared to Austria's. The alpine fragment of Austria was as thoroughly absorbed by Germany as Alsace-Lorraine or Luxembourg, integral parts of *Grossdeutschland*. Naturally there were nazis in all three countries. "Legally" we are liberated, actually we are occupied. And unlike Luxembourg and Alsace, we formed not even a unit in the Third Reich and even the synthetic name for Austria ("Ostmark" instead of Osterreich) was abolished in 1940. The percentage of Austrians killed by the nazis is five times as high as that of Americans killed in action. Still, without American help we would not be starving now, we would be dead.

ERIK VON KUEHNELT-LEDDIHN.

Bethlehem, Conn.

TO the Editors: Just what meanings am I to make of the letters commenting on Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn's "Letter from a Replaced Person," by Fathers Monaghan and Reinhold in your issue of January twenty-third?

The implication of Father Monaghan's letter seems to be that, since Kuehnelt-Leddihn has called the Americans frivolous and greedy, he had better look to the beam in his own eye. But, of course, he said no such thing: he said that Americans were, whether they had morally responsible knowledge of it or not, committed to the practical results of frivolity so long as their economic and geographical good fortune distracted them from the true gravity of the present European situation, fundamentally neither as a matter of economics nor geography. In the reference to the "old Pretender" and his American camp-followers (among whom I shamelessly take my place) I see no point, because Kuehnelt-Leddihn took his pseudonym when Austria was still held by the nazis and members of his family were living there.

As for Kuehnelt-Leddihn's *lapsus calami* about the death of Saint Augustine and Father Reinhold's conclusion that this indicates the author's bad physical and metaphysical state, I could by the same process come to the same conclusion about Father Reinhold, starting with the fact that he—certainly as literate as Kuehnelt-Leddihn is full of information—fails to mark an interrogative sentence with a question mark. Naturally, I do nothing of the kind.

Before writing this inquiry, I have several times read over I. Corinthians, 13, but the only meanings I can get from the letters of Fathers Monaghan and Reinhold are that they seek to answer Kuehnelt-Leddihn, one by impugning his motives, the other by questioning his mental balance. I should be most happy to be corrected.

GEOFFREY STONE.

PURE

SILK

SCARVES

ARE VERSATILE ACCESSORIES

A SCARF WILL MAKE YOUR WARDROBE SPARKLE . . . BRIGHTEN YOUR CASUAL OR YOUR DRESS-UP CLOTHES. OF PURE LIGHT-AS-A-FEATHER SILK . . . IN A GREAT VARIETY OF BEAUTIFUL COLORS AND DESIGNS. MAIN FLOOR

each 3.00

B. ALTMAN & CO.

FIFTH AVENUE MU. 9-7000

. . . and at East Orange, White Plains and Manhasset

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Stage & Screen

The Survivors

IRWIN SHAW and Peter Viertel, the authors, are not due to justify their title. Their play will have closed by the time this sheet hits the stands. Nevertheless, I think some discussion of it is worth space, mainly because it seemed to me such a round of confusions. Patently wishing to write against violence—killing, war—the authors have sewn their idea into a great woof of frontier melodrama. The business is period stuff, taking place just at the close of our Civil War, and gives us a young Union soldier, returning to his native Missouri to find himself constrained, against his own judgment and a lawyer friend's advice, to take up a family feud and provoke his own death. As the story spins, one finds that it is only the melodramatic elements which are so contrived as to keep the audience awake—when it is awake—while all the more serious elements are built into long, long, slow, and most sentimental speechifying. The authors' problem is a neat one: how to make order, or the desire for order, theatrically interesting. Now, historically speaking, I don't think I am wrong in assuming that order was very often achieved in the early state of our Union at the point of a gun, and therein lies a play. But it is not the Messrs. Shaw-Viertel's present play, and it is precisely in the messing of this point that they have lost not only a hearing, but an income. They have wished to draw an analogy between our recent war and a "period" feud—opposing circumstances from which no analogy can ever possibly be drawn. War, so far in our atom civilization, is still a legal process; guerrilla business is not. The authors have a firm, *real,* useful point in assuming that guerrilla business will often—and now and presently—present a gigantic moral dilemma to the world, but they have not built their play on this assumption: they have only assumed that violence as opposed to law is analogous to war as opposed to peace.

I think (it will be better to say, I suspect) that the only setting this over-all and messed conception of violence could embrace in our time, and in any land, would be a death cell, or a prisoner's dock. In a sense, Mr. Shaw hazarded this in his last unsuccessful play, "The Assassin"—but there he dared nothing, and resorted to a long conventional woo of the public before he finally achieved his non-hero out loud. Here, I find his resorts even sillier; especially in trying to oppose action to talk. If he would take a careful course in the other Shaw, he would find that the problem play can find a certain action in words. But only when all is wrought and weighted exactly. G.B.S. parcels not only his sense among his characters, but also, and with infinitesimal care, his wit. He deals very rarely in bores; and never in morally good ones.

This kind of lengthy and tortuous analysis ought to mean that I do cheerfully respect the authors' motives. But this is not entirely the case. In a sense I suspect them of contempt—as though they felt it honestly necessary to dress their pudding in cellophane before it could ever realistically be bought, or eaten. And I feel that Mr. Shaw, particularly, has let his imagination muscle bulge and go fat. I think he is nowadays writing scripts for producers and directors, rather than plays. He is playing safe. He has lost his mind's eye. I don't think he sees or cares where or how his characters are to enter upon our view, and I don't think he knows why they should do so. And I think he is not writing characters at all; he is writing actors. As painful as it sounds—and it is painful—I feel that this playwright is due for a good period of private calisthenics before he will again achieve the true communication of "Bury the Dead" and the "Gentle People." And a public.

Angel Street

SOME SORT of ticket-mix prevented my receiving any admission to the New York City Theater Company's first offering of "Volpone," so I am only able to assess them in this single performance of the Patrick Hamilton well-worn thriller. The piece stands up very well and still tingles one's spine, but José Ferrer appears intent on squeezing all the possible burlesquerie from the business, which seems to me a stupid attack and one which urges this usually intelligent audience into a number of unintelligent demonstrations. Uta Hagen, in the Judith Evelyn rôle, works like sixty, and Phyllis Hill, as the younger maid, is appealing. In order to reach the rafters of this enormous and ill-contrived house, it is apparent that this company has chosen a *slant* on proven revivals, rather than a straight grasp of material which would be large enough, and new enough, to hold anyone's interest. Nevertheless, here are some round actors practicing where round music has already paid its way. We shall see. (*at the City Center*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Shadows and Substance

IT IS AMAZING how seldom the movies go in for realism—the one property they are best qualified to display. But when a director does employ honest realism plus sufficient invention to interpret it, he is likely to make a film that can be spoken of as cinematic art. Such a film is *"Treasure of Sierra Madre."* The credit for this movie, like most good films, must be divided among many people: Henry Blanke for the excellent production; John Huston for direction that stands with the best of recent years and is reminiscent of the forceful style used by Eric von Stroheim in "Greed"; John Huston (again) for the remarkable script he wrote from the novel by B. Traven (that mysteriously unidentified writer who also deserves a share of the praise); photographer Ted McCord; art director John Hughes and several other artists, technicians and staff members whose work is less obvious but whose contributions often prove so important. And the cast in this good movie deserve applause—applause that they usually get anyway for most audiences remember and praise the actors when actually it is the director who is most often responsible for an outstanding performance.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Humphrey Bogart and Tim Holt portray a couple of American bums on the loose in Tampico, Mexico. (The Mexican sets are excellent.) They meet up with an old-timer (Walter Huston) in a flop-house. They join forces and climb the Mexican hills to look for gold. What happens when they find it, lots of it, more than it is good for some men to have, makes a thoroughly absorbing story, a story that is perhaps no surprise—for there's nothing like too much gold to bring out human frailties: greed, suspicion, petty meanness and even gross crime. More memorable than the plot, which turns out as it should, are the characterizations developed so well by the three leads in this male cast: Bogart's display of avariciousness, Holt's naive willingness, Walter Huston's wise understanding of men and what really constitutes life's treasures. All the performances in this picture are good but Walter Huston's acting is in a class by itself and hits a new high, even for an actor who has already won many laurels on the stage and on the more realistic screen.

Edward Small's production *"T-Men,"* which is based on a composite of cases showing how the Treasury Department goes after counterfeiters, is also strong on realism. In fact this well-knit film, directed by Anthony Mann, has stunning photography of several cities and a documentary atmosphere that make it seem like the real thing; and you're likely to have a new respect for T-men when you see Dennis O'Keefe and Alfred Ryder, portraying government employees, put their all into their jobs. The camera follows their training period, in a straightforward expository fashion, and then gets a little fancier while it focuses on their hectic experiences when they pose as gangsters, worm their way into a counterfeiting ring and finally expose the gang. Wally Ford heads the fine supporting cast which is made up largely of muggs who look pretty much as one expects counterfeiters to look. My main objection to this well made movie is that it carries realism a little too far at times, and some of the fights are too brutal to watch. However, if you want to get the low-down on the Treasury's undercover agents in action, this is the film for you.

The English have sent over a little item that attempts to be realistic about what goes on in one of those large British holiday camps. At times its Grand-Hotel kind of story gets somewhat corny and while I found myself interested, I was also annoyed at the pat solutions to the many tags of plot. The settings, which must actually have been photographed at just such a camp, are excellent; and the humor, with its many pathetic touches illustrating how people strain to have a good time or at least think they're having fun, is very well done. Flora Robson heads the large cast, most of whom are not known in this country and several of whom have no conception of acting. You may find *"Holiday Camp"* worth a visit, especially if you get pleasure out of watching other people's frantic search for pleasure.

Director Lloyd Bacon probably started making *"You Were Meant for Me"* as a realistic study of the boredom experienced by an orchestra leader's wife. But somewhere along the line the idea got out of hand, and the picture vacillates between realistic scenes and typical Hollywood hokum. Jeanne Crain, as the small-town girl who falls for the glamorous big-shot in the orchestra, and Dan Dailey as this theatrical phenomenon, are very well cast. Dan's song-and-dance numbers provide the picture's brighter moments. You may find the rest of the proceedings as dull as this orchestra leader's wife finds her life.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books

The Roosevelt Era. Edited by Milton Crane. Boni. $4.75.

ANTHOLOGIES are notoriously difficult to review. "The Roosevelt Era" is no exception to the rule. Mr. Crane tells us that it isn't a book about the late President Roosevelt. "It is an effort," he says, "to communicate, through the words of many writers, something of the ideas, the problems, and the actions of men and women in Franklin Roosevelt's America between 1932 and 1945." It would be foolish, of course, to quarrel too seriously with the editor (or with any other anthologist, for that matter) about his basis of selection. As a Roosevelt fan, however, perhaps the reviewer can gracefully suggest that Mr. Crane is the partisan rather than the historian of an era when he sets out to rationalize the obvious one-sidedness of his sixty-nine selections. "Yet how," he asks, "is one to find among the official or semi-official statements of the opposition anything that stands the test of time well enough to deserve perpetuation in print? Not even Mrs. Luce's speeches can qualify. So the humorous sketches of Mr. White and Mr. Sullivan must stand for numberless articles, books, speeches, snarls, and all that bitter talk whose origins must be sought in abnormal psychology." Come now, Mr. Crane! Roosevelt was a truly great man, but was he really *that* great? Many of his critics were ignorant and some of them were vicious and contemptible, but were all of them really victims of abnormal psychology?

While we are on the subject of selection, how does it happen that the religious life of the Roosevelt era is hardly so much as mentioned? Was the Roosevelt era a religious vacuum? Is the spirituality that one thinks he detects in some of Mr. Crane's selections nothing more than that "materialized spirituality" to which Maritain makes reference in "The Person and the Common Good?" If it is, let the United States beware; for, as Maritain reminds us, "Against this materialized spirituality the active materialism of atheism and paganism has the game in its hands."

Finally, can it actually be that Mr. Crane has never heard of the late Monsignor John A. Ryan, who wrote not dozens, but probably hundreds of important essays on phases of the Roosevelt era which loom large in

THE THEATRE GUILD presents
A NEW MUSICAL PLAY
ALLEGRO
Music by RICHARD RODGERS
Book & Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd
Entire Production Staged by AGNES de MILLE
MAJESTIC THEATRE 44th St. W. of Broadway. Evgs. 8:30 Matinees Thursday & Saturday, 2:30

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Crane's anthology and who, be it remembered, delivered the invocation at two of Mr. Roosevelt's inaugurations? (This is by way of pointing out—I hope without petulance—that Mr. Crane seems to have the traditional "liberal" unawareness of the contribution to American life of organized religion and its representatives.)

But pardon me. I said that I wasn't going to quarrel with Mr. Crane about his basis of selection. . . .

Mr. Crane has edited a book which will probably be even more serviceable to future historians than formal histories of the life and times of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. At least it will provide them with some of the cultural and social overtones which are so rarely incorporated into even the best of our history books. It will enable them to understand (within limits already alluded to and others which might also be mentioned) "what [some of] the American people thought, said, and did between 1932 and 1945 revealed by John Dos Passos, James Thurber, Carl Sandburg, John Steinbeck, Sinclair Lewis and others."

A word of warning, however, to PH.D. candidates of the year 2048: Don't try to generalize too glibly about the American people of 1932-1945 solely on the basis of the *New Yorker's* profiles, several of the best of which are, happily, salvaged from oblivion by Crane. And, above all, don't try to generalize about the so-called Catholic vote solely on the basis of Jay Franklin's well-intentioned, but somewhat superficial, clichés about "transmontane influences" and the "power of European politics to disrupt American democracy." Mr. Franklin has a point, but it ought to have been sharpened up a little by contact with a wider assortment of relevant facts. (Mr. Franklin, by the way, takes the cake as the doctrinaire of the era when he says that the Roosevelt court proposals "were, paradoxically, the work of a conservative group in the Administration and *were correspondingly insincere and slovenly.*" Italics added).

In summary, the historian of 2048 will do well to remember (and I say this as a *New Yorker* enthusiast) that not one in a thousand of the members of the UAW-CIO ever heard of the *New Yorker*. Neither did my Uncle Elmer. It was the Uncle Elmers and the members of the UAW-CIO and millions of their neighbors who elected Roosevelt for four consecutive terms and who constituted the great Republic of the United States, over the political destinies of which Mr. Roosevelt presided with such genius and such eclat. As Mr. Crane admits in his preface, as though to anticipate the carping critic, "the degree to which . . . any age expresses itself in its literature must remain ultimately unknown and unknowable."

Lest I forget, "The Roosevelt Era" is fascinating reading and was responsible for my losing a lot of sleep.

GEORGE G. HIGGINS.

F.D.R. His Personal Letters—Early Years. Foreword by Eleanor Roosevelt. Edited by Elliott Roosevelt. Duell. $4.00.

HE WAS certainly a good boy. He brushed his teeth and used floss silk and wore his heavy underwear, and wrote regularly to his parents and his cousins and his aunts and even went so far as to ask for an address so that he might answer an invitation—that last, from what I know of boys, is a sign of supererogation. "He was a quiet, satisfactory boy—we all liked him," wrote Dr. Peabody of Groton in 1932. The Rector's scrupulous lack of superlatives would have sounded incredible to the boy's mother, who lived to see her belief in her son's preëminence fully justified. Certainly the "Dearest Papa and Mama" of the letters did all they could to give the best of life to their cherished son. From the time he was three, he was their companion on their trips to Europe; Mr. Roosevelt taught him bird lore and some forestry and daily prayers; church on Sunday, respect, obedience and good manners were inherent in the atmosphere in the home Mr. James Roosevelt had acquired at Hyde Park on the Hudson. Until he went to boarding school at fourteen, Franklin studied with governesses and then tutors at Hyde Park.

The early letters are more or less a mirror of his parents; his father died in 1900, however, and in 1903, when he was twenty-one, Franklin suddenly announced to his mother his engagement to his cousin, Eleanor. Mrs. Roosevelt found it so difficult to imagine sharing her son that she sent him off on a trip to the Caribbean to think things over, and the most appealing letter in the collection is Eleanor Roosevelt's note to her "Cousin Sally": "I know how you feel—how hard it must be but I do so want you to learn to love me a little. . . . It is impossible for me to tell you how I feel about Franklin. I can only say that my one great wish is to try to prove worthy of him."

Another Grotonian, Chanler Chapman, once wrote, "A Bad Boy at a Good School" which it must be confessed is more entertaining reading. It is a comfort when F.D.R. calls some girl an "icecart" or a "brat" (names deleted) and, since he was always with his family during the holidays, the letters give a very shadowy glimpse of social life. They also give very little promise of the man to be. More than anything else they remain the private treasure of the Mother who catalogued them so precisely and stacked them so carefully in red cardboard boxes.

E. V. R. WYATT.

The Wild Sweet Witch. Philip Woodruff. Harcourt. $3.00.

MR. WOODRUFF wrote a wonderfully sensitive and exciting first novel about India, "Call the Next Witness," whose heroine was a young, murdered, Hindu girl. In this his latest novel, a tripartite story about Jodh Singh, his grandfather who killed a bear, and the various worthy, homesick, and indistinguishable British officials with whom he came in contact, Mr. Woodruff writes no less sensitively, but far less excitingly. Frankly, this story sags. There are over-long patches, descriptions of Indian mountain scenery, of remembered England, of tribal customs, sandwiched in without real relevance to the tale, and the big shifts of time and place are clumsily contrived, badly stitched in.

This account of the young peasant, of the bear-killing, of the saving of the life of the Deputy Commissioner, and of the bear-killers' over-educated grandson, who saves his people from forced labor, but fails to do the constructive act, is supposed to exemplify the boomerang quality of all human effort. Jodh Singh wants to do as Hugh bids him, and help the Doms, the miserable outcasts, but the good he tries to do ricochets into absurdity, ridicules him, and is changed into a bitter mockery. Past beauty stales, all beauty passes; the good we love becomes the evil we do. Mr. Woodruff has written a sentimental fugue on the consequences of original sin, a five-fingered

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

miauling on our fallen nature—but not a novel; not even a story to keep boys from play. All good Englishmen, and the one good Indian, entoiled and enmeshed in the fell clutch of circumstance, are too contrived.

Yet there are excellent moments. For example, when Jodh Singh first wonders if, perhaps, he really does change into a panther at night? Or when the odious Raghubar Dat is murdered in the Marchas's cabin. But there is too much over-all feeling that Philip Woodruff, packing his book with memory, just couldn't bear to leave out this incident, and so has stuffed it in, has put in this character because it won't take up much room, has left in this description because it will fold quite flat, and, in the end, has had to sit on the lid to make the wretched thing shut at all. He writes effortlessly well, is all of a piece with his language, like a good rider with his horse. But he has not yet mastered composition, and his power of selection is weak. But he must, please, quickly write another, and yet another novel, and the more action in them all, the better. For though he is a bit tedious when he sets his Christophers and his Susans a-dreaming of cuckoo-pint and cowslips, he excels, when he has them climbing or hunting, rioting or murdering.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

The Condemned. Jo Pagano. Prentice-Hall. $2.75.

SOMETIMES a man has an idea for a novel so urgent to him, so big for his artistic humility to grasp, that he writes with a halting earnestness which according to all the books should be a defect, but in fact, is not. He is so crazy with the importance of the job that he keeps jabbing with his finger into the reader's mind . . . this, it is *this* and I now think not that, and something should be done, and what can be? It is a kind of writing on one's knees at one moment, and gut-flinging with the apostate Julian the next. It is being unable to stay away from the scene oneself, coming on stage like the chorus and remaining stuck there.

For Henry Adams, violence was a part of education; it has become the common schooling of our time. A sordid little murder has been committed stumblingly and with objective pity; a lynching follows like a communal sob in the terror-charged air. Who, Mr. Pagano wants to know burningly, is the condemning, who the condemned? The replies are ready before the question is asked: society, psychology, evangelism have their vested answers. But the story demands to be told, the question teased. The story is told, tensely and starkly. More, it is encircled; the murderers, the common lot of the town with their vulgar opinions, the town's uncommon lot, with theirs—all are relentlessly stalked. "The Condemned" is for strong stomachs, yes, but it does not insult the mind.

RILEY HUGHES.

Message from a Stranger. Marya Mannes. Viking. $2.75.

THE STORY is introduced with a quotation from Conrad: "The dead can live only with the exact intensity and quality of the life imparted to them by living." If that were true they would not live long. But Miss Mannes says: "Do not demand that the dead retain their contours and their names . . . remember your moments of greatest happiness; and you will remember when you lost yourself." The anonymous dead live on, independent of the living.

But not perhaps at the very first. Olivia, the heroine of this novel dies in its opening pages. She then, for twelve months, lives the life of which Conrad speaks. She is present in the world of the living precisely to the extent that the living think of her and recall her to a knowledge of their affairs. Whitney, her husband, thinks of her and knows that he never knew her. She has not much time to be with him for there are others who demand her presence with greater intensity. Her children think of her and there she is, drawn into the midst of their troubles. Her first husband, whom she divorced, discusses her dispassionately with one of his students at N.Y.U. and she is present with him, mixed with his politics, and supremely wise about them too. Several of her lovers think of her when they hear of her death and this causes her to say some very wise things about promiscuity. Brian, the real love of her life, thinks of her longest of all, and she is a great deal with him until he too, peacefully and wisely, takes leave of her, sets aside the objects which still hold her near him, and departs to be married.

Brian became Olivia's lover after her divorce from the first husband, Max Aronson. The trouble was that he was married and, by the time he was free, Olivia, despairing that he ever would be free, and deprived of his physical presence because of the war, had married Whitney. To him, at last, she was faithful, though not in spirit, until the end.

By selecting such lives to deal with, Miss Mannes loses all chances of being awarded a prize recently instituted for the purpose of encouraging authors to describe wholesome, "clean" and inspiring lives rather than those we live ourselves. In her book there are no evasions. She knows, as we all know, that men and women in this world, now and always, are primarily aware of each other, and seek the absolute, in human love—and also in the trial and error of human love. Even in promiscuity, Olivia says, even when "I drank a great deal and I knew a great many men . . . in most cases some facet of love was present." That is what the books about the "clean" lives forget, that is what they leave out—the presence, guiding and ineffably promising, of love. And it is for this love that Miss Mannes feels such great compassion, and it is this that she places at the center of the world of the living and the dead. Compassion can be maudlin. But here that is not the case. It is never the case where there is tightness and directness in the attempt to put down the uncompromising truth of what you know and feel.

Olivia tells her story without any self-pity. I think that is why it is so moving. She is serene, but this does not mean that she cannot be indignant at fraud, or witty. Above all, she is truthful. And Miss Mannes, who does her writing for her, does it well.

When Olivia has told her story—when the living have ceased to recall her amongst them—she exists only "as a beat, a point, an element in some cosmic pulsation as pure and as ordered as the architecture of a fugue," not as herself but as a single atom in the "imperishable dust of creation." It is extremely interesting to see Miss Mannes approaching this difficult concept which is the freeing of the dead from preoccupation with their lives as individuals on earth. It is, of course, Olivia's story on earth which makes her first novel so excellent, and having this story told by Olivia after she is dead is a device. But I think it would not be understanding Miss Mannes if it were considered only a device. It seems to me a central part of the affirmation of her belief in life. "There was no end," says Olivia. There is, in Miss

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Published on Ash Wednesday—

PRIEST WORKMAN IN GERMANY

by Henri Perrin, S.J.

Translated by Rosemary Sheed

The Diary of a "Jesuit in disguise"—one of the young French priests who trained as mechanics and went as ordinary workers to the labor camps of Germany where priests were forbidden. This is not a story of horrors, except the horror Father Perrin felt when he realized how complete was the de-Christianization of the ordinary French workers. Not only did they see no need for a priest, they saw no need for God. How the author tried to reach them, failed at first and finally began to succeed, makes fascinating reading. In France the book, besides being a best-seller, has had an extraordinary reception from the Hierarchy: the author was sent for and personally congratulated by two Cardinals, his book has been read in the refectories of most of the seminaries and retreat houses of France. Father Perrin, with the full approval of his superiors, has now gone to work in a factory, to continue his own form of apostolate. $2.50

GOD THE FATHER

by Emile Guerry

This book of meditations on the First Person of the Blessed Trinity is an admirable example of that contemplative interior Catholicism so urgently needed in our time. Our Lord told us to pray to God the Father, but how many of us really think of God the Father as a Person? To increase in love and knowledge of Him would be no bad project for Lent. $2.50

THE APOCALYPSE OF ST. JOHN

by R. J. Loenertz, O.P.

Translated by Hilary Carpenter, O.P.

The Apocalypse, most mysterious of the books in the Bible, has always fascinated scholars and near-scholars: plain Christians may have wondered that God did not see to it that St. John made his meaning a little clearer. But the Apocalypse is in fact the final expression of the Mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven, and such a mystery is not for him who runs to read. This commentary, which shows the general plan of the whole book, and the main outlines of its mystical significance, is a most valuable introduction. $2.50

Order from your bookstore or from us

SHEED & WARD

63 Fifth Avenue
New York 3

Mannes's view, no mechanistic return through death to the nothing from which we are created. Miss Mannes does not use the word soul. Yet everywhere it is the soul she is considering—even when she speaks most directly about our insatiable hearts and bodies.

C. G. PAULDING.

Time and Chance. Cyrus LeRoy Baldridge. John Day. $7.50.

THE AUTHOR of this colorful autobiography seemed predestined to be a nomad. Already in earliest childhood he crossed and recrossed the States with his mother who earned her hard living as an itinerant "drummer." Shabby hotel rooms and the lunch counters of the railway stations were the substitute for home.

Pushed around in the homes of strangers, the boy did not become an embittered child. And suddenly he found a real home when his mother married the hotel owner of a provincial town and the boy could make himself useful by handling dozens of odd jobs.

But after a few years this small town world became too narrow for the ambitious young artist. He worked his way through the University of Chicago, made friends who enlarged his horizon and stimulated his intellectual life.

When the First World War came, his love of adventures drove him to Europe. He made sketches, first on the German, then on the Allied front, and when the United States entered the war, he soon became a staff member of *Stars and Stripes*. From this activity he found himself at the end of the war in the possession of some funds—for the first time in his life.

Another man might have settled down to a comfortable sort of bourgeois life. C.L.B., however, bought himself a steamship ticket to the Far East in order to discover the beauties of that part of the world which seemed to him most enticing and picturesque. Thus he started a life of extensive globe-trotting, wandering from one country to another, mostly with little money in his pocket but filled with an insatiable longing to know the yet unknown.

With his talent and his adaptability to the needs of newspapers and magazines, the artist might easily have had a far larger income by staying home. His travels were undertaken for the sake of traveling, and his drawings were both: the kind of diary that suited his particular gift and the means to pay his travel expenses.

To the commercial traveler or to the explorer who travels in order to study specific scientific problems, globe trotting seems to be an aimless, easy going leisure. For the artist, however who wants to embrace all the beauty with which the Creator endowed this globe, it makes sense to know each kind of landscape, the tread of beast and of man, all types of coined male faces and the beauty of women in all zones and of all races.

In the case of C.L.B. these features of the globe trotting artist were supplemented by the self educated American's lack of prejudice, his great social understanding and his affection for the gracefulness of the natives. When he stayed in India to draw for *Fortune* the ten most successful businessmen of the country, he used the greater part of his time to draw the different types of people in town and country. Better than many of the professional political observers this open-eyed artist foresaw already in 1931 the not too distant emancipation of the Indian nation.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This autobiography is written very unevenly. But all through the book there is a trait of simplicity and honesty that wins the reader's heart. The many drawings contribute to make this book a mirror of the earth's abundant beauty. To me, who roamed through Asia and Africa in younger years, this autobiography stirred up an irresistible desire to revisit these continents before the end of my pilgrimage on this planet. MAX FISCHER.

Donald of China. Earl A. Selle. Harpers. $3.50.

APART FROM the question of its lasting value, in "Donald of China" Earl A. Selle has written what might very easily prove to be one of the most interesting books of 1948. It has as its subject the almost legendary figure of William H. Donald—journalist, adviser to the Manchus, revolutionary guide of Sun Yat-Sen, and, finally, power behind the scenes in the Chinese Republic. Through the stories of Donald, set down by Mr. Selle while Donald lay dying in a Honolulu hospital, the reader is taken on a journey through more than 40 years of Chinese history and over thousands of miles of Donald's travels during those years.

Donald, Australian-born, went to China as a journalist in 1903. Within a few months his curiosity about China coupled with his stubbornness and integrity, had made for him a place as unofficial adviser to the Manchu viceroy of Canton. But in spite of this connection, his continual search for ways in which China might better herself led him to an alliance with Sun Yat-Sen, and during the revolution Donald fought and worked with the Republicans to overthrow the Manchu dynasty. During the turbulent years following the revolution he guided the leaders of the new republic, and really became the one who could, in the words of one of his friends, "Take hold of them like a Dutch uncle and tell them which is upwind and which is down." His profound influence, as the only foreigner to whom the inner circle of Chinese government had ever been opened, was felt everywhere. His work, which played a large part in the failure of Japan's demands on China in 1915 and which aided so materially in preparing China for her all-out war with Japan years later made him one of Japan's "most sought after" men in all China. In spite of this, through Japanese stupidity he managed to spend three years in a Manila internment camp during the last war without being found out. But the years of privation had their effect, and after a short stay in Honolulu he returned to China, where he died in November, 1946.

JAMES O. FREDERICK.

Note on a Seminar

THE *Review of Religion,* Columbia University's bi-monthly, published during the eight months of the academic year, offers, in its current number (January, 1948, Vol. XII, No. 2, $3 a year, single copies, 80 cents) various papers on a single theme, "Religion and Democracy" which was the subject of a Columbia fortnightly seminar held last year, and attended by some twenty members, amongst whom were men as distinguished in their fields as Reinhold Niebuhr and Carlton J. H. Hayes.

Obviously, such discussions were at a very high academic level, and, also obviously, their kingpin must be the definition of sovereignty. This all the papers carefully avoid. And, whilst avoiding also a definition of democracy, the members of the Seminar agreed to regard "the ideas of the French Revolution as historically central to

St. Thomas Aquinas'

COMPENDIUM of THEOLOGY

Translated by

Cyril Vollert, S.J., S.T.D.

The last writing of St. Thomas was his *Compendium theologiae.* In fact, death came to him before he had finished the work.

Thus the *Compendium* contains St. Thomas' theological judgment after a lifetime of study and teaching, his most mature conclusions. The brevity of the work has the advantage of giving at a glance and in summary form the views of the Angelic Doctor in his own words. Many will welcome this English rendition of the *Compendium.* The Latin original of this opusculum has not been readily available to theological students. This translation should serve to make St. Thomas' teaching more widely known.

The translator, well known to students of theology for his English version of Father Scheeben's monumental *Mysteries of Christianity,* is professor of theology in the Jesuit theologate at St. Marys, Kansas.

386 pages $4.00

B. HERDER BOOK COMPANY

15 and 17 SOUTH BROADWAY

ST. LOUIS 2, MO.

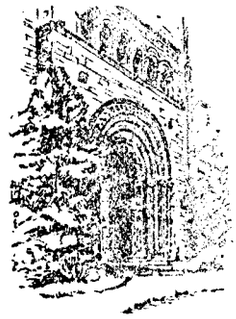
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

College of
CHESTNUT HILL
Chestnut Hill
Pennsylvania

Conducted by the Sisters of St. Joseph

Approved by the Association of American Universities.

For further information write to the Registrar.



Prospective students should make early application.

SETON HILL COLLEGE

GREENSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Pre-Professional Training for Medicine, Law, and Social Service. Teacher Education.

Degrees in Liberal Arts, Music, Home Economics

Accredited by Association of American Universities

Women from 11 foreign countries and 37 American States

COLLEGE OF ST. THOMAS ST. PAUL, MINN.

A LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE

which prepares its students for business or the professions. Exceptionally strong faculty. Fully accredited. Courses leading to B.A. or B.S. Degrees. Conducted by priests of the Archdiocese of St. Paul, assisted by lay Professors.

Address Very Rev. Vincent J. Flynn, President, Box K

COLLEGE OF ST. THOMAS

St. Paul 1, Minn.

IMMACULATA JUNIOR COLLEGE Washington, D C.

An accredited Catholic Institution for Women. Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Resident and Day Students. 2 year transfer course in Liberal Arts. Terminal courses in Home Crafts, Secretarial Science, General, Fine Arts.

SEMINARY—Four Year College Preparatory.
Dunblane Hall—Grades 1 to 8. Address: The Secretary.

Classroom Subscriptions

FOR THE SECOND SEMESTER

Orders for ten or more copies of THE COMMONWEAL are billed at half rate, 7½c each. A free copy is added for instructor or distributor.

THE COMMONWEAL, 386—4th Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

its development."

Even a superficial study of Darrell Figgis, or even of R. H. Tawney, would have improved the seminar's group utterances on the historical relations between the Catholic Church and democracy—although their conclusion that "the Church has always maintained as its primary function the creation of an equalitarian fellowship of believers within which each man works for his own salvation (a perfect religious expression of the ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity)" is praise indeed. But, surely, of both the following statements, is it not the exact inverse that is true? "Though Catholic theory has not reconciled itself to the modern interpretation of democracy, it has in practice engaged in democratic politics."

Indeed, Mr. William Fitzgerald's masterly study of "Democracy In Contemporary Catholicism" offers a denial of the first statement, and the fate of the German Christian democrats is an historically proven rebuttal of the second.

Professor Fitzgerald hits the nail firmly on the head when he states that "there is no isolated Catholic theory of the state. However, there is a definite Catholic theory of society, which includes the individual, the family, the Church and the state." His study deserves a far wider audience, as it is the best exposition of Pius XII's Christmas letter of 1944, and of the true meaning of *"Mit brennender Sorge."* And it admirably summarizes many of the conclusions made by Gonella in his somewhat diffuse and badly translated book.

John C. Bennett's recognition that Marxism is a Christian heresy is the basis for his brilliant study, which is excellently documented (though not perhaps entirely logical in its conclusions) of the development, within Christianity, of the elements favorable to democracy.

The article on the present position of the Baptists in Soviet Russia contains some startling figures: three thousand flourishing churches and over twenty-five hundred ordained ministers is an unsuspectedly large total, even though, as an explanation, the statement is offered that "the social ideals of the Baptists and Evangelical Christians in many cases coincide with those of the communists."

The *Review of Religion* also contains nine serious book reviews, of a length indeed impossible in less academic publications; these, on the whole, are discursive rather than critical, and there is a mutual backscratching quality amongst them all that is, perhaps, more religious than democratic, more Christian than scholarly.

A. F.

Paris Spleen. Charles Baudelaire, translated by Louise Varese. New Directions. $3.00.

LOUISE VARESE has already been acclaimed as the translator of Rimbaud; she has rendered well both the "Illuminations," and the "Season In Hell." Now she has turned to Baudelaire, and her work on the prose "segments" of his "whole serpent," as he called it himself, is excellent. In his introductory dedication to Arsene Houssaye, Baudelaire described his "poetic prose" as "without rhythm and without rhyme, supple enough and rugged enough to adapt itself to the lyrical impulses of the soul, the undulations of reverie, the jibes of conscience." Especially successful are "A hemisphere in your hair" and the sardonic "A generous gambler." New Directions has done Baudelaire and Miss Varese so proud as to production, with type and binding so magnificent, that the book is almost a bibelot.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED